

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 696
By Mumpower

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of the Reverend Doctor
Buford Smith of Grundy, Virginia.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of the Reverend Doctor Buford Smith; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Smith was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Smith served with acumen and alacrity as the Founder, President, and Chief Executive Officer of Living Faith Ministries and Television Network and as the Pastor of Tookland Pentecostal Church, earning the respect of his colleagues and parishioners alike for the exemplary quality of his work; and

WHEREAS, born in Eastern Kentucky and raised in Detroit, Dr. Smith was the son of Laura Bell Warren and Sawyer Smith; and

WHEREAS, thirty-seven years ago, Dr. Smith returned to Appalachia when he felt called by God to pastor in Grundy, Virginia; stepping out in faith, he became the Pastor of Tookland Pentecostal Church, where he led his fold through his life of love; and

WHEREAS, the Rev. Dr. Smith was a loving person who encouraged people to “look up and go with God”, promising them that “God will go with you”; numerous churches and foreign missions were established under the hand of this gifted servant-leader; and

WHEREAS, Living Faith Ministries, broadcast on WLFG-TV, first aired on January 1, 1995, and is now broadcast from Abingdon, Virginia; Bluefield, West Virginia; and Harlan, Kentucky; its powerful signal reaches every state in the middle-Appalachian region; and

WHEREAS, more than a labor of love, the success of Living Faith Ministries and of Living Faith Television Network is the result of Dr. Smith’s courage, fidelity, and desire to share his faith; and

WHEREAS, well-educated, Dr. Smith attended Union College, Luther Rice Seminary, and Emmanuel Baptist Seminary, where he received his Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Christian Broadcasting, his Doctor of Divinity Degree, and his Doctor of Theology Degree; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Buford Smith was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Smith enjoyed the loving companionship of his wife of many years, Mary Lou Roberts Smith, and was the proud father of Deborah Lynn and Billy Ray Dotson, Denise Rene and Wade McGeorge, and Michael David and Lisa Smith; and

WHEREAS, while preceded in death by two grandsons, Brian Keith Dotson and Parker Thomas Smith, Dr. Buford Smith will be dearly and daily missed by his siblings, Merrill and Ruby Smith, Jenople and Clarence Payne, and Wanda Sue and Don Burton, grandchildren Brandon Ray Dotson, Derick Brenton Dotson, Lawrence Tyler Dotson, Mary Rachael McGeorge, Christian Wade McGeorge, Austin Geoffery Benjamin Smith, Aaron Matthew Jameson Smith, and Gary Thomas Mullins, and his several nephews, grand-nieces, and grand-nephews; and

WHEREAS, aptly expressed by Representative Jason Mumpower, “Rev. Buford Smith was a great man of God, and he will be missed in our community. Over the years of his ministry, God used him to touch the lives of countless people in Southwest Virginia, Northeast

Tennessee, and Western Kentucky, and his legacy will live on in the many people who love and appreciate his good work”; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Smith leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of the Reverend Doctor Buford Smith, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Dr. Smith.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.